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Date: June 5, 2012

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation

From: Matt Smego
Legislative Counsel

Re: Testimony in support of SB 1121 (Implement of husbandry)

Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) is the state's largest general farm organization, representing over 48,000 Michigan farm family members. MFB is a grassroots organization where members at the local level develop, debate and adopt the policies for the organization.

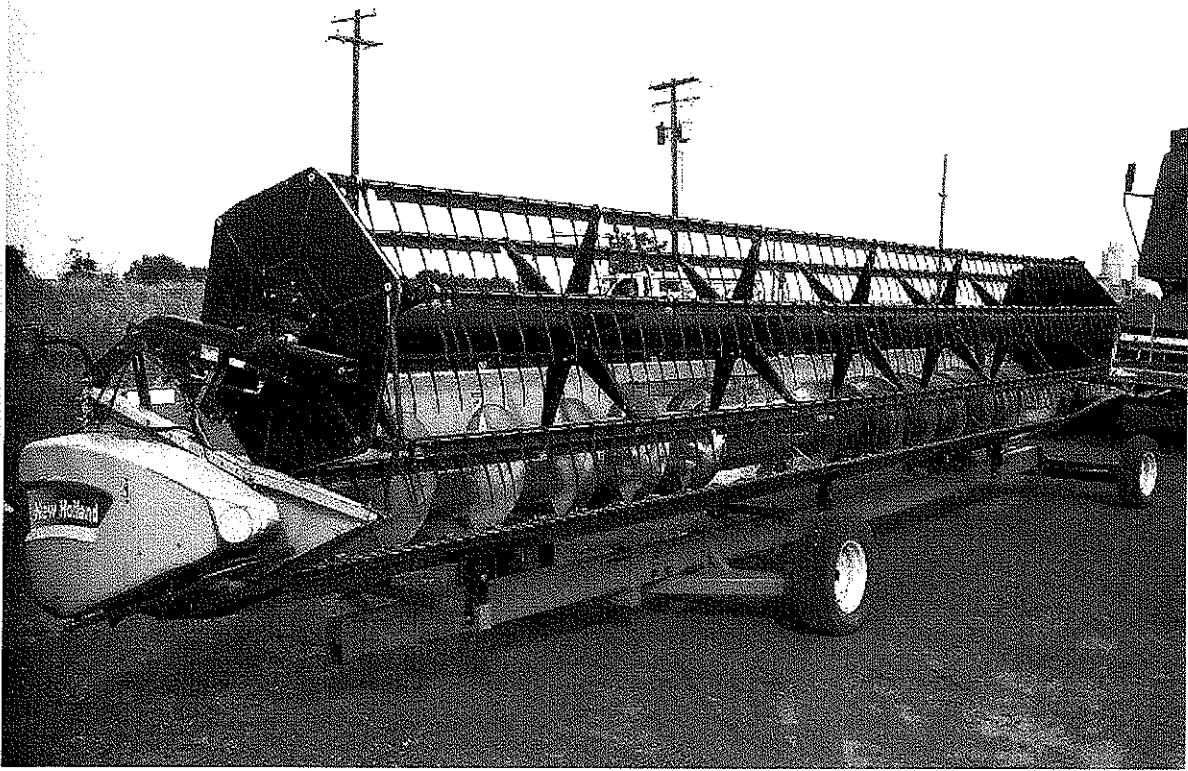
MFB urges your support of SB 1121 to update the definition of Implement of husbandry to reflect the modernization of today's farm equipment. An excerpt from MFB policy #99 Implements of Husbandry states, "We support revisions to the Michigan Vehicle Code to update the definition of "Implements of Husbandry" to better meet the practices of agriculture.

Agricultural equipment design has changed over time to meet the needs of modern agricultural operations; however, the current definition of Implement of husbandry does not fully reflect the needs of the industry. Enforcement interpretation of Michigan's statute MCL 257.21 has largely reflected the "functional use" of the equipment; however, there are situations outside of the existing definition that may not currently qualify even though the use is exclusively for agricultural purpose and intended as incidental movement.

For example, a manufactured combine header cart (see picture on next page) provides a safe transport of a combine head that can be towed behind the combine or pulled by a truck. This alleviates the farmer having to mount the combine head to the combine and transport down the road. Under the current definition of Implement of husbandry there is not a provision for this type of vehicle. Because the cart does not directly harvest a crop under the current definition it does not qualify. This cart is a single purpose piece of equipment, designed only to carry a combine head.

This is just one example of impact, as you can see there is a need to update the definition of Implements of husbandry to better reflect modern day agriculture.

Thank you for your support of SB 1121.



Header Cart Carrying a Grain Head



Combine with Grain Head in operation during harvest